

Africa NOW #126

Issued in October 2024, by Africa Japan Forum (AJF)

«Contents»

pp. 2-17 Special Topic: The experiences and future of children and youth with African roots

The Africa-Japan Forum (AJF) launched the African Kids Club (AKC) in 2006 and the African Youth Meetup (AYM) in 2019. How will the respective experiences of children and youth with African roots in facing their own roots and living in Japanese society be reflected in their own futures? This issue of “Africa NOW”, presents a special feature titled ‘The experiences and future of children and youth with African roots.’ This special feature looks at how their experiences and thoughts in the childhood are linked to their own work and activities, and what activities are needed for the future of children with African roots.

pp. 3-8 Round table discussion: The birth of lawyers with African roots by Ichikawa Yura, Kashiwakura Kissa Leila, Hayashi Junko

This article reports the round table discussion between Hayashi Junko, AJF’s auditor and a lawyer, and Ichikawa Yura, a young person with African American roots who grew up in Japan and has been a lawyer for two years, and Kashiwakura Kissa Leila, a young person with African roots who passed the bar exam and is currently a legal apprentice. Hayashi acted as a listener and asked Ichikawa and Kashiwakura to talk about their path to becoming legal professionals and their experiences and thoughts from childhood to junior and senior high school. Kashiwakura decided to become a lawyer when she was in her second year in university, shocked by the starvation death of a Nigerian at the Omura Immigration Center. After completing her legal training, she hopes to work on immigration and refugee issues as a lawyer. Ichikawa currently works as a lawyer, mainly dealing with divorce, inheritance and children’s issues for foreigners, and is also active in the Tokyo Bar Association’s Racial Profiling Project Team.

pp. 9-13 African Youth Talk Session report by Agyeman Julia, Nakao Abel, Kwarteng Eunice, Savane Morikawa Yoko

The report on the talk event where Savane Morikawa Yoko (AKC’s management member) was the listener and three youths with African roots, Agyeman Julia (Afro-dance dancer and instructor), Nakao Abel (model), and Kwarteng Eunice (a staff of Africa Japan Forum) were speakers. In this event, each speaker talks about their positive/negative experiences growing up in Japanese society, their current work and activities and their aspirations for the future. They also answered questions from the audience about whether they had been strongly aware of their roots or not, and how they dealt with bullying against people of African descent in schools and elsewhere.

pp. 14-15 Report of African Kids Club Kansai’s activity 2021-2023. Toward the future of African Kids Club Kansa by Nasu Dagba Junko

Nasu Dagba Junko, director of the African Kids Club Kansai (AKC Kansai), reported on the activities of the AKC Kansai in the financial years of 2021-2023. Since its inception in 2021, the AKC Kansai has hosted Halloween parties, Valentine’s Day events, Afro-dance classes, and more, and has broadened their activities by welcoming more members and internship students. Nasu Dagba hopes that the AKC Kansai will be a place where all the children with diverse backgrounds, especially African rooted children, can join and enjoy themselves.

p. 16 The Africa we want you to know by Sakaguchi Yu

Sakaguchi Yu, vice-director of the AKC Kansai, used to work as an intern at AJF when she was a university student. Sakaguchi says that she is continuing to work with the AKC Kansai, aiming for the organization to become a place where people with African roots can express be themselves as they are, and for more people to learn about and be aware of Africa.

pp. 16-17 For the future of African Kids by Lukumwena Minkola Aky

Lukumwena Minkola Akyi, whose parents are from Democratic Republic of Congo, is currently vice-director of the AKC Kansai. Reflecting on his own experiences as a Congolese who was born and raised in the Kansai region, Japan, he hopes that AKC Kansai will be a place where African kids can gather and have fun.

pp. 18-21 Ah Zimbabwe, Thank you Zimbabwe by Hayashimoto Kumiko

The Friends of Zimbabwe, which has been active since 2003, will close in 2024. Hayashimoto Kumiko, head of the Friends of Zimbabwe, contributed to this report on her own current situation during cancer treatment and the activities of the Friends of Zimbabwe from 2003 to 2018. The Friends of Zimbabwe held an event named ‘Dance with Africa’ from 2004 to 2008 annually to promote understanding of Africa. Almost every year from 2006 to 2018, textbooks have been donated to local primary schools at the request of schoolteachers. Since 2015, the Friends of Zimbabwe has supported the treatment and rehabilitation of Japanese karate practitioner Chiba in Japan. Chiba who recovered from his illness was able to return to Zimbabwe in 2018. Hayashimoto also describes her experiences in Zimbabwe in 2008, when she was taken to a political rally and a political supporter who had the support of a politician and was stopped by the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), a plainclothes police officer, and told that she was being detained because she had taken photographs of a supermarket and riot marks.

pp. 22-27 Interview with Shiratori Kurumi and Shiratori Kiyoshi: How to find Africa’s “Yes” from Africa’s “No”

Interview with Shiratori Kurumi and Shiratori Kiyoshi from the Africa *Rikai* Project (Understanding Africa Project). Since 2003, the Africa *Rikai* Project has been publishing activities (to date it has published eight books in Japanese and four in English), holding seminars and workshops, and supporting product development projects to enhance understanding of Africa. In this interview, we asked Shiratori Kurumi and Shiratori Kiyoshi about what they learned from their encounter with Africa, how they aimed to create books that convey the richness and potential of Africa, and how they tried to sell their books themselves without going through a publisher. In addition, this article includes photos and information on the books published so far by the Africa *Rikai* Project.

pp. 28-29 Introducing AJF’s group ‘Exploring African News’ and interns

Since February 2024, the Africa Japan Forum (AJF) has been running the ‘Exploring African News’ which introduces domestic and foreign news and analysis on Africa in Japanese about once a month. Tamai Takshi, co-chair of the AJF and in charge of this activity, explained the significance of this activity from three points of view: to learn Africa casually, to learn Africa one step deeper and to ‘explore’ African news. In addition, each of the four interns (Aoki Mei, Okuhira Sora, Kubo Janeth Tamaki, and Nakano Hiroki) who are ‘exploring’ news from Africa talked about their reasons for participating in this activity, their areas of interest about Africa, and what they hope to achieve through this activity.

p. 30 Talk about one’s own book: “History creates conflict, Conflict creates history: Violence and reconciliation in contemporary Africa” by Matsumoto Hisashi

Matsumoto Hisashi introduces his book ‘History creates conflict, Conflict creates history: Violence and reconciliation in contemporary Africa’, edited by Sagawa Toru, Takezawa Shoichiro and Matsumoto Hisashi), *Rekishu ga Umidasu Funso, / Fushi ga Umidasu Rekishu: Gendai Afurika ni okeru Bouryoku to Wakai*” (in Japanese). In the 21st century, various conflicts are still occurring in various parts of Africa, including clashes over natural resources, violence by religious fundamentalist organisations, terrorist acts by rebel groups and guerrilla warfare. The book examines the complex intertwining relationships between conflict and history in these conflicts, drawing on case studies from Mali, South Africa, Uganda, South Sudan Nigeria, and Rwanda. Matsumoto states that understanding the conflicts created by history and the history created by conflicts is necessary to learn about the ‘living history’ that is etched in people’s everyday lives and to establish peace.

p. 31 Potential and future expectations for wild food and indigenous food in Tanzania by Shirakawa Chihiro

This is the third installment of “The World Seen Through Food.” This issue reports on an online seminar on 22 June 2024, with Kato Tamahi, a member of a study group on reading FAO reports, as the presenter. Kato gave a presentation based on her book “Changing Dietary Patterns, Indigenous Foods, and Wild Foods: In Relation to Wealth, Mutual Relations, and Health in Tanzania,” of which she is one of the editors. This book analyzes the merits and the demerits of eating wild foods, native foods that have been accustomed to the land for many years, and modern foods that are brought in from outside and often purchased, based on research in four regions of Tanzania. Kato also introduced another book with information and photos of wild edible plants in Tanzania, including their characteristics and nutrients

Back cover Afterword (‘Hitotsu no musubime to shite’ in Japanese) and a record of AJF’s activities